

**City Council Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**August 15, 2023 ~ 5:00PM**  
**City Hall, Delta Junction, Alaska**



**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / PRAYER**

Mayor JW Musgrove called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

**Council members present:** Mayor JW MUSGROVE, Mike PRESTEGARD,  
Pamela RAWSON, Igor ZAREMBA, Pete HALLGREN

**Council members excused:** Deputy Mayor Emily DOVE, Travis RIESNER

**City employees present:** City Administrator Ken Greenleaf, Administrative Assistant Flower Cole,  
City Clerk Pat White

**Public present:** Twenty members from the community were present at the beginning of the meeting, including eight scouts in the audience and four on Zoom. Two personnel from Forestry provided updates on fire situations.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Musgrove asked to move *Sipes Preliminary Plat* from *New Business* to after *Comments on Non-Agenda Items*.

**Motion:** Hallgren moved to approve the August 15, 2023 agenda as amended; Prestegard and Rawson seconded.

**Motion passed** on a roll call with five in attendance.

**AMENDMENTS ~ APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**Motion:** Zarembo moved to approve the August 1, 2023 minutes as presented; Hallgren seconded.

**Motion passed** on a roll call with five in attendance.

**COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - none**

**REQUEST TO SPEAK**

**Scout Troops 56 and 65 – Request for Funding**

Aden McCarrick explained their presence in recent service projects; retiring flags and helping with the library fundraiser, Memorial Day Ceremony, and Community Cleanup.

Sophia Palmer explained that they learned new survival skills twice a week for three months to prepare for the Midnight Sun Council's Klondike Derby at Lost Lake last spring. They placed second overall, "Most Rugged" for their sled, and were honorably mentioned by an Army representative for having the best communication skills.

Megan Phelan reported they raised \$890 from bake sales and \$1,000 from selling firewood to pay for camp fees.

Aden McCarrick reported 80 to 100 scouts and adults from Interior Alaska will attend the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Fall Camporee the weekend of August 25/27. Each scout must advance through stations to earn their Engineering Merit Badge and compete in a pop bottle rocket launch.

Scoutmaster Andrea McCarrick expressed appreciation for Council support of Troops 56 and 65 and invited them to stop over for the rocket bottle competition on the Alaska Highway, 6:00pm, August 26.

**Motion:** Zarembo moved to donate \$1,000.00 toward the Midnight Sun Council Fall Camporee; Rawson seconded.

Hallgren said it was wonderful to see so many community volunteers, dedicated parents, and scouts themselves working to become good citizens.

**Motion passed** on a roll call with five in attendance (Prestegard, Hallgren, Rawson, Zarembo, Musgrove).

**Division of Natural Resources, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection – Wildfire Update**

Kale Casey reported there are over 300 firefighters in the Delta area, 200 arriving in the last three or four days. The local crews did an amazing job holding the wildfires with so few resources. Casey encouraged accessing YouTube (AlaskaDNRDOF), Facebook (AK.Forestry), Twitter (@AK\_Forestry), and AkFireInfo.com for video clips from the past two days, including helicopters and a Canadair CL-415 Super Scooper hauling 1,620 gallons of water. Smoke jumpers were deployed last night to protect remote cabins, including ones that are not in the database.

Discussion followed regarding Forestry posting fire updates at E&G (aka IGA), Petro Wash (aka Delta Industrial Services), and Forestry as well as 12 other locations, structure survival dependent on defensible space, Pogo Road Fire (47,000+ acres) much larger than previous years, and Mount Hayes Fire near Gerstle River (7,000+ acres).

## CORRESPONDENCE

### Public Notice – Pogo Mine Waste Discharge

Musgrove reported the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) issued a public notice about a waste discharge permit proposed by Pogo Mine. Contact Tim Pilon (907-451-2136 or tim.pilon@alaska.gov) during the 30-day comment period (August 11 / September 9, 2023).

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### Repair or Sell Volvo L220 Loader

Greenleaf reported a local mobile mechanic is getting analytics on the L220 Loader. A 1985 compactor with only 6,000 hours was located at a dealership in Wasilla. It was previously owned by the Department of Defense. It would be inspected before it would be an option to purchase.

### Increase Landfill Rates

Greenleaf reported more research is necessary. The landfill is the only City function that creates revenue. We spend money to dig a hole to make money to fill it and make another hole. The cost of running the landfill is more than in 2015, the last time tipping fees were increased, but increasing fees is not an option unless it is justified. Adjusting charges for different items, i.e., tires, may be considered because of the amount of space they require. Hallgren questioned how long Cell 2 should last. (It is about one-third larger than Cell 1.) He asked for Fairbanks North Star Borough fees to be part of the data collection because they are the closest to our proximity. They have prices for garbage produced outside the borough. Profits from last year's landfill operation (\$155,000) will be used to pay the three-year landfill permit (\$30,000) and the new gas monitoring requirements (\$120,000). Musgrove said the landfill makes money daily, but not once expansion and closure are factored in (\$2,000,000).

### New Fire Chief Position

Greenleaf reported there are five or six potential candidates interested in filling the volunteer Fire Chief position vacated by Erin Trainor Catterson. No news has been received on the Safer Grant, which would pay for the position for three years. Tony White, a volunteer Fire Chief in the past, is interested but not committed. Greenleaf said he is excited for the future of the Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department (DJVFD). He praised Erin Trainor for keeping equipment maintained and the City administration informed, while working a full-time job and raising a family. Even after resigning as Fire Chief, she dealt with blown tires, electrical problems, and multiple issues while working with Forestry during the height of this year's fire season.

### Tender 162 Surplus

Musgrove reported the City is scheduled to receive Engine 24 from the City of North Pole on September 9.

Greenleaf reported the City is expected to donate a fully operational vehicle in return for receiving one. Only one community responded to the advertisement. Rural Deltana was aware of the nomination packet but did not apply. Discussion followed regarding North Pole still utilizing Engine 24 while they await the arrival of their new engine and DJVFD Tender 162 replacing Tender 161 that was experiencing tire issues.

Motion: Zaremba moved to donate Tender 162 to Gakona Volunteer Fire Department upon receiving Engine 24 from North Pole; Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Hallgren, Zaremba, Prestegard, Rawson, Musgrove).

## NEW BUSINESS

### Preliminary Plat - Sipes Homestead Subdivision

Sebastian Saarloos reported Sipes Homestead is roughly 80 acres and owned by the Estate of John W. Sipes, Jr. There is no road sign, but a road winds west through 20 lots (2.89 to 6.51 acres) between the Richardson Highway and Spengler Road. The Department of Transportation (DOT) requested lots 1 and 14 access via Sipes Homestead Road, not from driveways off the Richardson. Golden Valley Electric (GVEA) already has power lines through the subdivision. Roads that are identified as 25-foot accesses will be named Mae Jean Lane, Irene Lane, and Willa Mae Lane on the final plat that will be presented on September 5. The standard note is on the plat, "by approval of this plat, it does not obligate the City, the public, or any other governing body to construct, operate, or maintain improvements." There are no liens against the property. All lots have access to highways and utilities.

Motion: Prestegard moved to approve the preliminary plat for Sipes Homestead Subdivision; Zaremba seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Rawson, Hallgren, Prestegard, Zaremba, Musgrove).

### **Second Reading, Public Hearing, and Adoption of Ordinance 2024-01, An Ordinance Amending Elections in Title I and Title II of the Delta Junction Code of Ordinances**

Motion: Hallgren moved to open the public hearing portion of Ordinance 2024-01; Prestegard seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Zaremba, Prestegard, Hallgren, Rawson, Musgrove).

Musgrove called for public comments.

Mary Leith referenced City Code §2.30.020(c) and said she objected to eliminating the ten-day grace period to receive absentee ballots. That section (“... an absentee ballot must be postmarked by midnight of Election Day and received by the Clerk by the close of business on the tenth day following the election.”) was revised to read, “an absentee ballot must be received by the Clerk before the polls close on Election Day.” Leith said if she drops her ballot in the mail five days before the election, there is no guarantee it will be in Delta Junction in time to be counted. She asked to at least allow until the end of the week if not the following Monday. It takes four to seven days to receive mail from Arizona.

Discussion followed regarding 1) changing the Code to “... absentee ballot must be postmarked by Election Day and received by the Clerk by 3:00pm on the Friday following Election Day,” 2) changing “Ballot envelopes received after *the* time shall not be opened ...” to “... envelopes received after *that* time ...,” and the Canvass Board meeting at 4:00pm on the Friday following the election instead of the morning after the election.

Motion: Prestegard moved to close the public hearing; Rawson seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Rawson, Hallgren, Prestegard, Zaremba, Musgrove).

Motion: Hallgren moved to adopt Ordinance 2024-01; Prestegard seconded.

Motion: Musgrove moved to amend Code §2.30.020(c) as presented.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Zaremba, Prestegard, Rawson, Hallgren, Musgrove) to make changes to Section 2.30.020(c) as discussed.

Musgrove called for more changes to the election codes with none being offered.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Rawson, Hallgren, Prestegard, Zaremba, Musgrove) to adopt Ordinance 2024-01.

### **City Purchases over \$1,000**

CK #22701 to Alliance CPAs - \$4,836.24 for FY22 audit (\$2,824.00) and FY23 audit (\$2,012.24)

CK #22702 to Arctic Fire & Safety - \$5,262.83 for Straw Wattle, Landfill Cell 2 SWPPP requirement (\$4,808.08), annual gas monitor calibration (\$118.75), and House Identification Program signs (\$336.00)

CK #22703 to Delta Building Supply - \$2,208.80 for maintenance of City facilities

CK #22704 to Delta Rental Services - \$22,100.00 for rock truck for Cell 2 project (7-5-23 / 8-1-23)

CK #22705 to Delta Surveys Associates - \$1,200.00 to survey Landfill Cell 2 (July 20, 2023)

CK #22706 to Delta Transport Services - \$7,512.00 for equipment fuel for Cell 2 project (7-19-23 / 8-8-23)

CK #22707 to GVEA - \$4,034.36 for July electricity

CK #22708 to Kel's Septic - \$1,600.00 to pump restrooms at park concession pavilion (7-11-23)

CK #22709 to Numbers Count, LLC - \$2,880.00 for accounting services (7-31-23 / 8-11-23)

CK #22710 to UL LLC - \$3,186.00 for DJVFD fire truck ladder inspection (\$1,042.00), heat sensor labels (\$24.00), and NFPA pump inspection (\$2,120.00)

Motion: Prestegard moved to approve checks # 22701 through 22710; Hallgren seconded.

Motion passed on a roll call with five in attendance (Zaremba, Rawson, Hallgren, Prestegard, Musgrove).

### **REPORTS**

**Mayor** – JW Musgrove reported:

- The Alaska Railroad Corporation requested a letter of support from the City of Delta Junction for their grant application to replace the (MP G3.3) railroad bridge that crosses the Chena River at Fort Wainwright. He conducted a phone poll and received support from Council members to issue a support letter.

- A second-class city can impose a sales tax per Alaska Statutes. Retail fuel sales can be taxed, but wholesale distributors cannot. The City has made no effort to pass a fuel sales tax, but there is discussion in the community that it could pay for areawide ambulance services. Musgrove said he does favor finding a solution to pay for it. Discussion followed regarding gasoline pumps currently only inside the City limits or at least 50-miles away.

See additional discussion about ambulance services under *City Administrator Report* (page 5).

**Finance** – JW Musgrove reported timecards are difficult when they land on the same week as Council meetings.

**Library** – JW Musgrove reported in Emily Dove’s absence:

- The library, the benefactor of several very large donations of books and movies, will share them with the community at the annual Fall Fundraiser, Book, Movie and Plant Sale, September 8/9 at the Community Center.
- Children’s programs will start back on September 29.
- Three children finished the *1000 Books before Kindergarten Reading Program* in the past week.
- The bottle-filling water fountain arrived and will be installed by one of the school district’s maintenance employees in September. He has installed several of these in local school buildings.

**Health & Safety** – no report

**Schools** – Pamela Rawson asked about follow-up from two school district requests (August 1, 2023).

Greenleaf reported that he walked both the circular driveway in front of the middle school and the proposed crosswalk on Nistler Road with Junior High Principal Jeff Lansing and Elementary Principal Milt Hooten. The crosswalk is within the City’s capabilities since it involves a City-maintained road. However, there is an existing crosswalk in the area that no one uses. He requested Stephen Hammond, M2C1, provide a cost to engineer a survey for an electronic crosswalk that is tied to electronic monitoring of speed zones, so people are not limited to lower speeds when school is not in session. Beacon lights will indicate when the school speed zone is active and when traffic is stopped so students can cross the road. An apron must be built to encourage use of the crosswalk. The State of Alaska, responsible for the Delta-Greely School District (DGSD), would oversee the pavement issue in front of the middle school. The condition of the curved driveway is much worse than just that section.

**Emergency Services** – Pamela Rawson reported Delta Medical Transport had 27 runs in July.

**Park & Recreation** – Igor Zaremba reported:

- The ballfields look rough. There are more weeds than grass.
- Cracks in the outdoor rink are significant. He asked to fill them with tar before freeze-up because it will cost more to repave the rink, if the cracks fill up with water and then freeze.

Zaremba excused himself at 6:51 pm.

**Landfill** – See *City Administrator Report*

**Airport** – Mike Prestegard reported:

- Two lot owners in Airport Subdivision II are pouring foundations.
- Forestry choppers have generated a lot of activity at the airport.

Musgrove reported the cost to rent a portable outhouse (\$500/month) was more than one month of tie-down fees. In exchange for mowing the airport, the City paid for an outhouse. The estimated cost to mow the airport was about \$1,000.

**Public Works** – Mike Prestegard asked about the Public Works building grant.

Greenleaf reported he would inquire whether it could be used toward the crosswalk on Nistler.

**Emergency Preparedness** – Mike Prestegard referred to the wind-driven catastrophic fires in Lahaina, Maui on August 11 and encouraged people to prepare for such emergencies, especially since they were caused by wildfires.

Musgrove asked for Council input on addressing the graffiti on paved roads (brought up on August 1, 2023). He asked for a consensus to post public notices, draft an ordinance, or make phone calls.

Prestegard suggested a written policy and to permit use of sidewalk chalk, but no permanent paint.

Hallgren said markings on Deborah Street were excessive and longstanding for the size of the once-a-year Deltana Fair Parade. He suggested calling the Fair Board and the School District to request they cover the graffiti and to use chalk instead of permanent paint from now on.

**At Large** – Pete Hallgren reported Norway is nice, but not as nice as Delta during the summer.

**City Administrator** – Ken Greenleaf reported:

- The Alaska State Troopers fear a kid on an ATV or dirt bike getting hit. They’ve attempted numerous times but have a policy to not chase them for safety reasons. The City could post signs and establish policy, but how would it be policed?

Hallgren reported he witnessed three motorbikes last weekend, doing wheelies while traveling at least 30mph through the Harper/Kimball intersection, totally ignoring the stop sign.

Discussion followed regarding \$40,000 fencing vandalized around dirt bike trails at the fairgrounds (2010) and parents paying attention to where their kids are.

- Bristol Engineering started the landfill permit cycle, which will include engineering plans for the two gas monitors. He hopes to start core drilling in mid-September and install the sensors in the spring.
- The City was not awarded the grant to help with the new sensors that are required by the State of Alaska. He applied for another landfill grant. Its status and three others that are specific to the Fire Department will be known in September.
- Cell 2 development is about one-third complete. The second third is moving much faster, and the northeast side is almost finished. Material is stockpiled outside the operational cell, roads are done, most of the ramps are reinforced, and rocks are in place. Delta Industrial was able to get another rock truck after the (second) replacement truck broke.

- The SWPPP (Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) was accomplished last week.
- The Public Works building maintenance employee resigned last Friday. A temporary hire will assume the position next week. That position, the street/equipment operator, and the finance position will be readvertised. Musgrove reported Henry Muth retired in May, but periodically helps when necessary.

- Public Works replaced seven or eight new stop signs because they keep disappearing.
- Due to not enough traction in getting an EMS provider, he asked that the City Council advertise Request for Proposals within the next 30 days. There are hard-faced realities that this community must address. Do we want ambulance services? What will it cost? What are the enhanced and reduced versions? City voters will decide what will affect the entire community because everybody uses the ambulance service. Something must be renegotiated because funding will only last seven or eight months. The edge of the cliff is now, not when funding runs out. Musgrove asked to expedite soliciting for proposals because it will highlight what options are available. He explained City finances and allocating unused funds to various functions.

Discussion followed regarding funding from the Supplemental Emergency Medical Transport Plan not sustainable, and Rural Alaska EMS faced with the same dilemma as Delta Junction.

**Cemetery** – Pat White reported she has been working on cemetery records pertaining to pending burials.

Discussion followed regarding 71 plots remaining in the private section, the Public Works crew focused on Cell 2 development at the landfill until October 8 and clearing trees thereafter to start the cemetery expansion.

**City Clerk** – Pat White reported candidate packets will be available on August 18, before the filing period (August 24 through September 8). Ballots will be available by September 13 for early voting.

**Additional Reports** – none

### **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Gary Gruwell asked about opening the old landfill on Tanana Loop Extension, whether Kinross is involved.

Greenleaf said the City does not have any contract or arrangement underway with Kinross / Manh Choh. He is working with DEC because of finding that the old landfill was not closed properly. There is approximately 80 acres of unused land and, at some time in the future, the old landfill could be used to dispose of construction and demolition, which would never reach the water table. Nothing can happen until the landfill is closed correctly.

**ADJOURNMENT** – 7:44pm

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JW Musgrove, Mayor

CITY  
SEAL

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Pat White, City Clerk

Approved: September 5, 2023